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| ***Technical*** | |
| *Suggestion/issue* | *Response/Action* |
| Make the form accessible and user-friendly | We will work with the EMS Project Team teams to optimise the new DOI form and pilot before release. Choice of EMS vendor will determine functionality﻿ to some extent |
| Can the form be iterative, asks series of questions, to get to a more helpful and appropriate version of the form | We are exploring options to make the form responsive in the new EMS. Ideally, we want the form to respond to questions and only show the authors questions they need to complete but we may be limited by what the new EMS platform can handle. |
| More information pop-ups/guidance on the form | We are creating guidance documents to make sure CRG staff are supported in completing the new form. We will explore the use of tooltips/pop-ups with the EMS Project Team, but this may be limited by what the new EMS platform can handle. |
| Provide timely prompts for MEs regarding when authors should complete/update their DOI forms. | Automated reminders to authors would be available through the proposed EMS solution. |
| Automated notification/flag to MEs when author DOI forms are submitted, particularly if they include potential conflicts | The first part of this is a key piece of functionality that will be available in the EMS. Unfortunately, the EMS will not be able to able to flag which declarions are conflicts or barriers to authorship. |
| Can the DOI collection form help authors to understand that they are responsible for investigating whether the companies they mention have an interest in the review topic (e.g. make the intervention or comparator)? | The functionality on the DOI form is dependent on which workflow and EMS vendor are chosen. |
| ***Workflow*** | |
| Suggestion/issue | Response/Action |
| There is a problem with different DOI reporting on Archie form and on review; problem with declarations not matching | We know this is a challenge and are working with the EMS Project Team to identify a solution which will be signed off by the Governing Board. Our choice of EMS vendor will impact what functionality is available﻿. |
| Links to the policy should be built into the review proposal form. | Work with the EMD publishing team and ME Support to revise the current Review Proposal Forms |
| What are the implications if an author does not complete the form? | Ideally reviews would not be able to progress if the author has not completed the form, but this is dependent on functionality available in the new EMS. |
| Emphasize the responsibility lies with authors to correctly submit forms | The policy states this explicitly and this will also be outlined in all documents. |
| Another time that DOI forms are requested and checked is on publication of protocol or review; if conflicts have arisen during this time, it can be difficult to find out a review cannot be published | The revised policy sets out when declarations should be updated. Sharing information early in the process with authors about their responsibilities may help to alleviate these problems. |
| ***Resource - tools*** | |
| Suggestion/issue | Response/Action |
| Scenarios are helpful, like quiz questions today. Scenario’s developed for key and common situations. | Online learning modules based on scenarios will be developed. Additional training options will be explored with the Learning Team and ME Support |
| Decision tree/flow chart – lays out next steps (ideally this is part of the form.) | We will work with the Learning Team & ME Support to decide how a decision tree is best presented. Implementation as part of the DOI form is out of scope |
| Template or example letters for use in the referral process | We are working on creating these in time for policy rollout in October |
| ***Resource - documents*** | |
| Suggestion/issue | Response/Action |
| Clear workflow documentation for the new Editorial Management System | This will be created when the new EMS has been selected and will be part the onboarding for the new systems and could also be available on the COI portal. |
| Need for concise guidance | We have developed a policy summary doc for authors which will be available on the COI portal and can be shared with the authors. |
| The slide presented which demonstrates the Timeline – could this be available on the website for MEs to send to authors with links to the new and old policy? | Yes, we can add this visual representation to the COI portal. |
| Provide visuals, images, diagrams to help explain the policy | We are continuing to work with Learning Team to prioritise resources. Plans to create a COI decision flow diagram are already being discussed. |
| Continue to update the portal and resources, specifically the FAQs this should continue after policy launch | We plan for the portal to be continually updated with more guidance, FAQs, and evolving resources. |
| Access to a short and very clear summary flyer that highlights the main points of the full policy, possibly including the slide with the timelines and the implications on a review depending on the stages it is in (protocol/published review/update and when these commenced) | We have developed a policy summary doc for authors which will be available on the COI portal and will consider adding info about timelines |
| A short explainer video: that covers the COI form that authors have to sign and highlighting specific sections and how they relate to the policy. | We have discussed this option with the Learning Team. Since it could be resource intensive, we'll discuss with ME Support to assess the relative value. |
| Make sure there are author focused resources online potential FAQs | Several suggestions for specific author-focussed resources were made during the virtual workshops. We will work with the Learning Team & ME Support to prioritise and develop some of these. |
| Pre-written/packed resources that could be sent to authors ahead of them proposing a title | Specific resources suggested during virtual workshops will be prioritised and developed and will be available via the COI portal. |
| MEs check whether forms are correctly completed, and check the potential conflicts authors have (lots of back and forth with authors) | We will develop guidance for authors to help them accurately complete the form. If this can be embedded in the form that is ideal, but our options will be tied to functionality in the new EMS. |
| ***Events*** | |
| Suggestion/issue | Response/Action |
| Virtual workshops may be a good format. | We will continue with workshops and webinars until policy launch; the Learning Team have proposed that COI training also be included in staff inductions. |
| A webinar directed to authors or a training module that highlights the important details of the policy. | Authors may be a challenging group to reach via webinars due to their sometimes-transient associations with Cochrane. A policy summary that CRGs can share with authors is being developed. |
| It would be good to periodically review the issues raised with CoI Arbiters and share experiences, cases, solutions. | We are discussing with the Learning Team the possibility of running "COI Policy Clinics". |
| ***Comms*** | |
| Suggestion/issue | Response/Action |
| There should be at least 1 specific COI email, not included in newsletter | We are working with KT Dept to manage communications to the CET and community to make sure everyone is kept up to date on policy decisions and rollout. |
| Increasing communication between networks about CoI could grow the knowledge base and create CoI champions within groups so they feel more confident making their own decisions. | Explore options with Research Integrity Editors and COI Arbiters and the KT Dept about how to encourage Networks to take on a stronger support role. |
| Authors are often not aware of how Cochrane policy differs from other journals, make sure this is emphasized in comms | We will work with the KT department to find the best way of communicating with authors, particularly on disseminating the policy summary. |
| Support should not come from just MEs, important for CET to do prep work leading up to policy implementation | It may not be feasible for the CET to directly support authors but EMD, Learning Team, KT Dept are all working together to support CRGs with training and resource development ahead of policy launch with a view to helping the CRGs to help the authors. |
| ***COI Case Referrals*** | |
| Suggestion/issue | Response/Action |
| Easier way to submit ‘smaller’ queries and bypass the form | General queries can be submitted via the referral form with low effort, however general rulings (outside of what is in the policy) are difficult to provide so cannot bypass the formal referral process. |
| Quicker responses | The new COI Panel Terms of Reference (LINK) sets out the expected timeframes for an initial response to COI case referrals. |
| Standard turnaround times for queries/referrals | The new COI Panel Terms of Reference (LINK) sets out the expected timeframes for an initial response to COI case referrals. |
| Authors to speak directly to COIA | Discuss the feasibility of this with Research Integrity Editors and COI Arbiters |
| Write replies very clearly, in a format that can be passed onto the author | Take this forward with Research Integrity Editors and COI Arbiters. |
| ***Out of scope*** | |
| Suggestion/issue | Response/Action |
| Authors on multiple reviews have therefore to complete multiple COI declarations (understanding their conflict may be different for different reviews) but is it possible to have a single form for the author with separate sections that relate to their different reviews? | At this stage we aren't able to offer this kind of service. Authors will still need to complete a different form per review as their conflicts between different reviews will be different. Attempting to combine these into one form is out of scope as it would make the form significantly more complex and there are technical implications for how those conflicts are allocated to reviews. |
| Drug company database keeping track of companies /what they produce, who the own, how they are linked. | At present we don't have the resources to create this kind of database; we are developing guidance to help MEs to search for information about drug company products. |
| Would a database of all authors’ conflicts be useful so that MEs could just look up potential authors to see if they are conflicted or not would this be possible with GDPR (and resource obviously) | This isn't something that is in scope for this project but is something we are aware is being working on by Convey. It could be something that is implemented further down the roadmap, but for now there our technical and policy limitations that would prevent it. |
| RevMan Web integration; another validation check before publication – automated check of COI; possibility of an automated alert within RevMan Web (e.g. Declaration of interest section)?; Include pop-ups to provide additional info/advice on COI policy (similar to Revmans ‘get more information’). | If the EMS is used to collect DOIs they would be added to the review at publication time, not isted in RevMan, so there will not be a logical point for the proposed features to be included in RevMan web If and how RevMan Web might be used is something we will continue to discuss with the ITS Team. |